

South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exceptional group of students, teachers, and parents of the Bell Street Middle School Science Olympiad Team, which just won its 10th consecutive Science Olympiad State Championship. Let me repeat that: 10th consecutive Science Olympiad Championship.

The Science Olympiad program is one of the premiere science competitions in the Nation, providing rigorous standards-based challenges to nearly 6,200 teams in 50 States. Science Olympiad's continuously changing event lineup exposes students to a variety of career choices and gives them an opportunity to meet participating and practicing scientists, as well as the opportunity to have life-changing mentors.

Science Olympiad was founded in 1982, and Bell Street Middle School, there in Clinton, South Carolina, began competing in that in 1986. The Science Olympiad Team at Bell Street was formed by three very inspirational teachers: Rosemary Wicker; Dr. David O'Shields, who is a close personal friend; and Michael Mack. Mr. MACK and Dr. O'Shields still work in the school district in Clinton today. Michael Mack is a member of the science faculty at Clinton High School, and Dr. David O'Shields is currently the superintendent of Lawrence County School District 56. Both continue to be active event coaches for the incredibly successful Bell Street Science Olympiad Team. Many of the Bell Street Middle School's Science Olympiad alumni have gone on to become extremely successful in the areas of science and technology.

One example is the gentleman Dedric Carter. Dedric was a former member of the Bell Street Middle School Science Olympiad Team who went on to enroll at MIT for college. He later became MIT's assistant dean for engineering and a lecturer in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. He is currently the senior adviser for strategic initiatives to the Director of the National Science Foundation.

Another one, Jarrett Campbell, is also an alum of Bell Street Middle School's Science Olympiad Team. After competing in the Science Olympiad teams in middle and high school, Jarrett went on to complete a doctorate degree in chemical engineering at the University of Texas at Austin. Jarrett worked for Advanced Micro Devices, where he was awarded over 25 patents in the area of semiconductor technology. Today, Jarrett works as a global energy management specialist for a U.S. company in Paris, France. When he was asked about his experience with the Science Olympiad, Dr. Campbell said this:

Not only did the teacher, coaches, and parent volunteers pique my interest in science and math, they continually challenged me to

expand my knowledge by competing in new disciplines. Looking back, I see how important the camaraderie, teamwork, and constant desire to excel, along with the examples set by these role models leading the team, was exceptional in setting the stage for my career in engineering and energy management.

I believe this statement sums up how valuable this program is to our Nation's youth.

Finally, I would like to take time to congratulate all of the coaches and the members of this year's State championship Science Olympiad Team from District 56's Bell Street Middle School. This year's team included: Mike Beasley, Stephanie Braswell, Jalen Carter, Lawrence Coleman, Terry Craig, Andrew Gann, Karl Gustafson, Dalton Langston, Beth Meadors, Zack Ray, Jonathan Shiflet, Kyle Smith, Bowen Tiller, Nathan Vondergeest, Clay Wright, Triston Moon, Daniel Moore, Luke Ragin, Jacob Wesson, Audrey Atkinson, Chris Cannon, Justin Easter, Dawson Green, Jack Harkins, Tara Hiller, Ami Meadors, Jill Meadors, Olivia Moore, Brianna Motte, Jakob Pountain, Michael Richey, Justin Shockley, Dillon Snead, and Bailey Stephens. Those are the students, but the teachers and the parents that volunteer need to be singled out as well. I don't have them by name, but let them know that we certainly appreciate their efforts.

These are the future scientists. These are the new innovators coming along. I'm excited that at middle school they're challenging these students to be the best they can.

May God continue to bless those students, teachers, and parents. May God continue to bless Bell Street Middle School, and may God continue to bless America.

ENGAGING AFGHANISTAN PEACEFULLY, NOT FORCIBLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it is February 29, a date that exists only once every 4 years, and yet this is the third February 29, the third leap day, that we've been at war in Afghanistan.

I have my granddaughter here with me. She's 8 years old. She's not lived in the United States when we were not at war.

Last week in particular, we were exposed to the grave dangers and the fundamental flaws of our Afghanistan strategy. The week started with the burning, accidentally, of several copies of the Koran by U.S. troops. That sparked days of violence and protests throughout the country. Angry Afghans tried to storm U.N. compounds and other Western installations.

At our largest military base, thousands, including many who worked at the base, gathered to throw rocks and

shout "Death to America." Days later came the killing of two NATO soldiers, shot in the back of the head while working at their desks inside the Afghan interior ministry. The killer was apparently a Taliban insurgent who had infiltrated the government security forces and penetrated what is supposed to be one of the most secure buildings in Kabul.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that police officers, the ones we are supporting and training to keep militants at bay, are losing patience with our continued military occupation of their country. One of them told *The Washington Post*:

Afghans and the world's Muslims should rise against the foreigners. We have no patience left. We will attack the military foreign people.

In response to all of this, General John Allen has ordered the removal of all NATO personnel from Afghan government ministries in and around Kabul. Out in the field, some U.S. soldiers have been instructed not to engage too directly with Afghan security forces, even though the training of these forces is at the heart of our very mission in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, can there be any doubt, given what has happened over the last week or so and the last 10 years, that our 10-year military occupation is losing and not winning over there? The hearts and the minds of the Afghans have been lost to the United States.

The amazing thing is there is talk that the recent unrest might delay the withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan. If anything, we need to accelerate that withdrawal. It's this war that has sewn the seeds of resentment and mistrust. It's this war that has increased instability and strengthened the insurgency. It's this war that is fraying the partnership and heightening the tension.

Mr. Speaker, what if we engaged Afghanistan in a different way—peacefully, rather than forcibly, not in war? What if we sent—at a fraction of the cost and pennies on the dollar, I might add—what if we sent civilian experts to help rebuild Afghanistan and invest in its people?

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What if we focused on humanitarian aid instead of military aggression? That's the SMART Security philosophy that I've been advocating for many years now.

I'm convinced that such an approach would show the way to greater peace, greater security and prosperity in Afghanistan. We can't begin to do this soon enough. Despite everything that's happened—not just this past week but over the last decade—the Pentagon continues to tell us the Afghanistan strategy is sound and it is succeeding. Do they think we're not paying attention?

It couldn't be clearer that what we're doing isn't working. It's time for SMART Security, Mr. Speaker. It's time to bring our troops home, and the time is now.

THE GREAT RULER PAGE II

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the country cannot afford the great ruler, his administration, and especially his policies.

He costs too much.

He spends too much.

He blames others too much.

He violates the Constitution too much.

He blames George Bush too much.

He infringes on religious liberty too much.

He ignores our border security too much.

He divides the people too much.

He refuses to assume responsibility too much.

He misleads the poor too much.

He sues States too much.

He refuses to compromise too much.

He blames the rich too much.

He subsidizes failed green energy projects too much.

He encourages people to depend on the government too much.

He vilifies capitalism too much.

He preaches government intervention too much.

He regulates too much.

He campaigns too much.

He blames businesses too much.

He blames George Bush too much.

He taxes too much.

He punishes people who pay taxes too much.

He promises "free stuff" to non-taxpayers too much.

He likes the word "debt" too much.

He regulates our lives too much.

He likes big government too much.

He blames oil companies too much.

His budget hurts veterans too much.

He likes high gasoline prices too much.

He blocks offshore drilling too much.

He stonewalls domestic energy too much.

He gambles taxpayer money on unproven energy projects too much.

He sends money to countries who hate us too much.

He despises the Keystone XL pipeline too much.

He apologizes for America too much.

He blames George Bush too much.

He cuts benefits to our veterans too much.

He blames the Tea Party too much.

He blames Congress too much.

He preaches America's best days are behind us too much.

He blames conservatives too much.

He likes the word "czar" too much.

He turns his back on Israel too much.

He treats our enemies better than our friends too much.

He blames our problems on Greece too much.

He blames our problems on the Europeans too much.

He ignores individual freedom too much.

He is anti-free market too much.

He cuts defense spending too much.

He infringes on personal liberty too much.

He has to have it his way too much.

He tramples on states' rights too much.

He blames Congress too much.

He blames George Bush too much.

And he really, really, really despises Texas too much.

Mr. Speaker, we no longer can afford the great ruler, his administration, and especially his policies.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING SHERRY STINEBISER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Sherry Stinebiser for decades of service to the communities of northwestern Pennsylvania.

On June 25, 2011, Sherry was elected to a 1-year term as president of the ladies auxiliary to the Department of Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign Wars, the VFW. Like every task Sherry has taken on in her long career of service, her primary goal as president has been serving others.

Joining the Ladies Auxiliary in 1996, Sherry is a life member of Cleo Bargerstock Auxiliary 1424 in Marienville, Pennsylvania, which is located within the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

Outside of the auxiliary, Sherry has worked for more than 30 years as a licensed practical nurse. She has volunteered her spare time as an emergency medical technician and serves as a board member of a group called Experience Incorporated, a local organization in Warren and Forest Counties dedicated to providing services to elderly citizens.

Albert Einstein once said: Only a life lived for others is worth living.

A model citizen who has committed her life to serving others, I believe Sherry would agree.

Thank you for your service, Sherry.

KEYSTONE UPDATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give the American people an update on the Keystone XL pipeline.

Monday, President Obama took the first step to get out of the way and bring tar sands oil from Canada to my home, southeast Texas. It's the yellow pipeline line here on this chart.

The administration agreed to build the first segment from Cushing, Oklahoma, right here, to southeast Texas, the Port of Houston and the Port of Port Arthur. In announcing the administration's changed position, White House spokesman Jay Carney said:

Moving oil from the Midwest to the world-class, state-of-the-art refineries on the gulf

coast will modernize our infrastructure, create jobs, and encourage American production.

Amen.

430 miles down, 1,223 to go. But there is no new oil with this pipeline being built. None. So, Houston, we still have a problem. And that problem is exploding prices for gasoline.

Since the day President Obama took office—and he took office on January 20, 2009—since that time, gasoline prices have doubled, from \$1.84 per gallon to over \$3.70 per gallon. Doubled. This hits Texas families hard. If you have a pickup truck with a 24-gallon gas tank and fill it up every 2 weeks, that's a \$90 increase in gas expenses per month. There goes the \$1,000 every American got by the payroll tax cut extension, something we fought for 2 months here in Congress, just thrown away.

In a speech in Miami, our President said there was "no magic bullet" to lower gas prices, and there's some truth to that statement. The President is limited in what he can do to lower gas prices, but there's a lot a President can do to increase gas prices. Unfortunately, President Obama's policies have put us on a path to the worst summer for gas prices in our country's history. We enter this summer with the highest gas prices in our country's history at this time of the year. They're only going to go up. And the President had a knee-jerk reaction to the Gulf of Mexico spill. He shut the gulf down for nearly a year. That's at least 10 American rigs that left the gulf for overseas, taking American energy with them, and American jobs.

□ 1100

He chose Hollywood elitists and radical environmentalists over American unions and the American people by putting the Keystone pipeline in limbo. And while a small portion of the 20,000 jobs the full pipeline would have created are going to be kept by this new decision—4,000 of them—we still have no new oil. Eighty thousand barrels a day flowing through the Keystone XL pipeline is not going to happen. We're just basically building another lane on the freeway.

The most alarming thing to me is that the Obama administration has spent 3 years watching Iran export terror and develop their own nuclear weapons to destroy Israel. Now that the House and Senate, followed by the European Union, have imposed sanctions on Iran over their nuclear ambitions, the Iranians are threatening to shut down the Strait of Hormuz.

This is a map of the Strait of Hormuz, and as a former naval aviator who deployed for 6 months to the region in 1994 and flew low-level missions through the strait, I can tell you that the Iranian threat to shut it down is real—very real. It's a narrow body of water, 30 miles wide at some points. It's worse because, as you can see, the sea lanes where the ships go through